

# **Boxer to hear testimony on Inland air pollution**

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Sen. Barbara Boxer has scheduled a congressional field briefing Wednesday in San Bernardino to hear testimony about how the Inland region is affected by air pollution from trucks and trains.

Boxer, D-Calif., is chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and has sponsored legislation aimed at reducing air pollution produced by ships in seaports.

San Bernardino County Supervisor Gary Ovitt asked Boxer in August to take testimony on air-quality issues facing San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Ovitt has said he wants Boxer to sponsor legislation requiring railroads and the trucking industry to use cleaner-burning engines and fuels.

The Senate committee has invited state and local government officials, environmentalists, scientists and health advocates to testify. A witness list provided by the committee staff does not include representatives of industries affected by air pollution regulations.

The increasing volume of cargo arriving at the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles in the past decade has resulted in more trucks and trains hauling freight through the Inland area.

The Inland region has become a cargo distribution hub, with dozens of large-scale warehouses in Ontario, Fontana, Mira Loma and other Inland communities. That brings thousands of diesel trucks.

Regional and state regulators last month adopted a clean-air strategy that calls for greatly reducing emissions from diesel trucks to bring fine-particle air pollution -- which includes diesel soot -- down to healthy levels in time to meet a 2015 federal deadline.

South Coast Air Quality Management District officials have called the region's air quality an emergency. Health studies have blamed air pollution for as many as 5,400 premature deaths and 2,400 hospitalizations each year in Southern California.